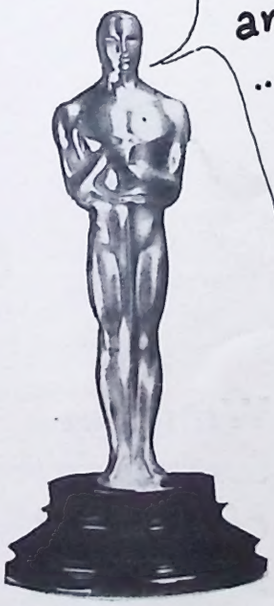
"The Great Ziegfeld" Arrives at London, Welcomed by Sam Eckman

CANADIAN MOVING PICTURE DIGEST

Vol. 28. No. 3 TORONTO 2, CANADA May 9th, 1936



"I'm the SHORT SUBJECT PRIZE of 1935 and they gave me to M-G-M for that hilarious 'HOW TO SLEEP' featuring Robert Benchley... but on the level folks, I didn't know which M-G-M Short to honor with my presence... there were others equally great, for instance ...'PERFECT TRIBUTE' Chic Sale's portrayal of Lincoln...'HIT AND RUN DRIVER' another of the wonderful 'Crime Doesn't Pay' series ...also AUDIOSCOPIKS, the greatest audience novelty in ten years... and 'PIRATE PARTY ON CATALINA'- another of those star-studded Musical Revues.. and all those HAPPY HARMONIES cartoons by Harman-Ising... and those de-luxe FITZ-PATRICK TRAVELTALKS... I guess I'd better make up my mind that I'll be the permanent guest of Leo, Junior!"

PRIZE TALK!

PUBLISHED BY

CANADIAN MOVING PICTURE DIGEST COMPANY LIMITED

259 SPADINA AVENUE, TORONTO 2

RIGHT! *Typical ad used in New York*

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4th Week Chicago	Starts May 8th Houston
3rd Week Los Angeles	Starts May 8th New Haven
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3rd Week Montreal	Starts May 8th Worcester
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Established 1915

Publication Weekly

Subscription: $5.00 yearly

RAY LEWIS
Editor and Publisher

THE LITTLE PAPER WITH THE BIG IDEAS
"Easy to Digest"

Published by Canadian Moving Picture Digest Company, Limited

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AN OLD FRIEND

THE Digest editor remembers how sadly the late Mr. E. F. Albee pointed to photos of old Showmen in his home, friends of his, who had passed on, saying as he looked at them, "Only I remain, I who am alone".

So many Showmen, whom the editor of The Digest knew as friends, have passed on, that when an added name appears, The Digest almost hates to mention it; and yet, how can we forget Felix Feist, so long associated with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in an executive capacity? How can the editor of The Digest forget one of her first bosses in Motion Pictures, Felix Feist of the Equitable days, of the days of Louis Selznick, and the beginning of World Films, with the entry into Motion Pictures of William Brady.

It seems but yesterday, and now Felix Feist is with the Millions and Millions of Yesterday. We mourn him as an old friend, a man who was never too busy, nor too important to pause, when meeting him, to exclaim, "Ray, how are they treating you?".

KORDA WILL DIRECT LAUGHTON

ONE of the last interviews which your editor had, at London, was with Mr. Alexander Korda, who told her that he would no longer personally direct pictures, since the business structure of his company made too many, and too arduous demands upon his time.

Your editor thought that the retirement of Mr. Alexander Korda from directorial work would be a loss to the British Film Industry, who had too few big directors to spare their Korda.

Your editor told Mr. Korda her views. Now we are happy to report that Mr. Korda will personally direct Mr. Charles Laughton in his next picture, "Rembrandt".

The possession of a "Rembrandt" painting is like the possession of a paid-up life annuity. Laughton should be excellent, as, "Rembrandt", and the picture-production should present some very interesting characterizations, not overlooking, "The old woman paring her nails," a Rembrandt masterpiece.

A FINE MEMORIAL NUMBER

THE Woodstock Sentinel-Review of Ontario editorially refers to The Digest's Memorial Number to His Late Majesty, George V., as follows: "The Canadian Moving Picture Digest, Toronto, has published a very fine memorial number as a tribute to His Late Majesty, George V. Profusely illustrated, it contains as well many expressions of mourning from film company executives. The main article is the work of Ray Lewis, editor of the paper, which is the only British motion picture paper on this continent, and this year celebrates its 21st birthday." Thanks, Mr. Editor of the Sentinel-Review.

THE RT. HON. MACKENZIE KING

"THE Prime Minister has asked me to acknowledge receipt of the copy of the Memorial Number of the Canadian Moving Picture Digest.

"Mr. King appreciates your kind thought in sending him this copy, which he is very pleased to have for his records." Signed by H. R. L. Henry, Private Secretary to the Prime Minister of Canada.

RAY PRESENTS

RAY LEWIS

WHEN is an idea money? My own experiences have taught me, when an idea is down in black and white, coupled with a few "whereas" and "the party of the first part and the party of the second part agree to etc., etc.," added to which are deliberate and distinct considerations, also in black and white, explicit and in detail, with a date at the head of the document, the names of the parties written out in full, to avoid legal confusion, and signatures affixed, with witnesses added for legal measure.

It has happened that verbal agreements are as good as a contract when backed up by the testimony of willing witnesses, who heard the verbal agreement, and developments which become "exhibits", these having accrued from the verbal agreement, added to which there is certain correspondence in your possession referring to the verbal agreement, all combined to convince a judge that there must have been a verbal agreement. You note that I mention the word, "judge", for the verbal agreements generally lead to "judges".

All this occurs to me while noting, that Mr. Gustavus Rogers is suing his alleged cousin, Mr. Charles Rogers, because the latter is alleged to have left him out in the cold, on the Universal deal, when he, Gustavus, is said to be responsible for the plan and idea through which the interests of C. M. Woolfe acquired Universal.

Mr. Carl Laemmle is being sued by a broker, who claims he was responsible for bringing Standard Capital into the Universal Picture. I thought Mr. Carl Laemmle was going to get a rest from the worries of this Industry.

THIS Industry of ours is full of ideas, some are wasted upon the desert air, other find fertile soil, some make men rich, not necessarily their own ideas, others make men poor, the latter, generally their own ideas.

The clever and successful business man is like a sponge, in that, he has absorbing power, the latter more necessary than original ideas. It is profitable to the profiteer to let the other fellow do the thinking, to spread the gospel of ideas, which the clever man transmutes into gold.

Not all men with money-making ideas, can make them make money. Many a man, with no ideas of his own, has that sense of values, which sees a profitable idea, and can get it started on its career of profit-making.

The man who has the ideas is oftimes incapable of working them out, or making them profitable to himself. The irony of this limitation, which Nature has imposed, is that the man of ideas is generally called a "schlemiel" (a fool), because some one has taken the idea and turned it into cash, while the "schlemiel" continues to figure out the cheapest place and way to live.

Mr. S. Charles Einfeld, director of publicity and advertising for Warner Bros., has sent over 2000 letters to film editors of various daily newspapers in America, requesting cooperation, by way of determining public reaction to the double bill feature.

"We undertake to survey with open mind, seeking neither to approve or disapprove the practice, but only to gain the information we vitally require", states the Warner questionaire.

WARNERS state that fifty percent of the operating theatres are utilizing double feature bills, and yet, the ten best pictures for 1935, as selected by the National Board of Review, had an average running time of one hour and forty minutes, exceeding the average running time of the general standard length picture by over 46%. This tends to present a problem for producers, who are undecided as to whether their productions should be lengthened, or shortened.

Pictures such as, "Midsummer Night's Dream", "The Great Zeigfeld", "Showboat", are certainly too long for double feature bills; and yet there is a decided tendency on the part of producers to make "Big Pictures", long enough for a evening's show, and a decided public taste which is reacting favorably toward such long productions.

Everyone is agreed that pictures are longer, and better. If this standard of Quality and length is to be continued, the double feature picture is on the wane. The Digest will be among those who will not mourn when the double feature bill has passed away. The double feature program has a tendency to lower admission prices, the quality of a theatre, the quality of the manager, the advertising, the patronage and unquestionably the quality of production. Most of the theatres which run double feature bills, as I surveyed them in Los Angeles, looked like cheap circus shows to me.

WHILE I am on the subject of theatres. I note that RKO is weeding out the "weak sisters". Mr. Leo Spitz is on this job, "dropping a few" and acquiring a few to add to the strength of a desired position. RKO, at the present time operates approximately 100 theatres, exclusive of those which are pooled with other operating interests. Mr. Nate J. Blumberg, operating head of RKO, recently

(Continued on page 9)

Joseph P. Kennedy All Set for Paramount Survey; William F. Rodgers Appointed General Sales Manager M-G-M

British Film Digest

Special to The Digest from our London Correspondent Dennison Thornton.

NOT content with making Abyssinia safe for democracy, Mussolini now wants to take over control of all foreign-made motion pictures distributed in Italy. This applies to American and British product, as well as to the output of other producing countries. Mussolini's plan would be to place the Italian Government in charge of alien footage in Italy. The Government would import and distribute foreign pictures and pay for such product out of a national fund.

It is understood that if Mussolini does take this contemplated action, American companies will withdraw entirely from the Italian market, shutting up their offices there.

In the meantime Italians are actively engaged in a big drive to increase national production. Studios are in course of erection, and big-scale production plans are well in hand.

Jan Kiepura

JAN KIEPURA, the young operatic tenor who achieved fame by his singing in G-B's "Be Mine Tonight" (called "Tell Me Tonight" here), is writing scenario's for himself in Paris. Kiepura, it is said, is highly displeased with his Paramount Hollywood picture, "Give Us This Night", and Paramount, it seems are not exactly mourning the departure of Kiepura whose tempermental doings on the set are said to have whitened the producers hairs.

Anyway, Kiepura is now engaged on a scenario called "Under the Sun" which deals with war and freedom in his native Poland. The picture will be produced in Vienna, with its author as the star.

Producing in London for M-G-M

JAMES FITZPATRICK whose traveltalks distributed by M-G-M have long been a popular item, is to produce a number of feature pictures here for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

The independent Sound City studios at Shepperton, a few miles outside London, will be used. About £15,000 (sixty thousand dollars) will be spent on each production.

The line-up includes: "Gangway", "David Livingstone", "The Bard of Avon", "Thomas Moore of Ireland", "All the World's a Stage", "Velvet Fingers" (a story of composer Chopin), "Auld Lange Syne" (based on the life of Robert Burns), and "The Captain's Cabin", a sea yarn.

No stars or directors have been announced.

The Late Andre Sennwald

It is the irony of fate that many an artist achieves only after death the recognition and full eminence denied him during his life. The case of Andre Sennwald, the clever young film critic of the New York "Times" who recently died in a mysterious explosion in his New York apartment, affords yet another instance of life's strange cheating of an artist's fame during his years on earth.

I use the word "artist" in relation to Sennwald on the assumption that the best film criticism is now permitted to enjoy a place in the society of the literary arts. The majority of the films Sennwald reviewed may not have been art, but in his writings about them, whatever they were, he revealed the fine temperment and feeling of an artist. His criticism was the product of a cultivated mind, an excellent taste and a sound judgement.

Most of the London and provincial newspapers printed notices of Sennwald's tragic end. The "Observer's" estimable reviewer extolled his critical virtues at length and lamented the loss to film criticism suffered by his passing.

Few of those who were familiar with his work will doubt that had he lived, Sennwald would have achieved a position of eminence in the critical sun. He stepped successfully into the vacancy on the "Times" created two years ago by the resignation of Mordaunt Hall. What he wrote was intelligent stuff intelligently written, and intelligent film criticism is not too common in these days of editorial preferences for "chatter" written not by critics by by retailers of "gossip".

The passing of Sennwald has robbed the cinema of a member of that small group in England and America whose critical taste and dignity in the treatment of the motion picture is something to be valued and respected.

Saville Will Produce for United Artists

AS I recently mentioned in these columns, Victor Saville, one of G-B's leading directors and mainly responsible for Jessie Matthew's present eminence, has formed his own production company. He will produce and direct three pictures a year for United Artists. The first of these, just announced, is "Storm in a Teacup", an adaption of a very successful West End stage play by James Bridie. Shooting will commence at Denham in June. No cast has been chosen yet.

Saville's next will be "Gentleman, the King", the story of General Gordon of Khartoum fame. I understand it may be filmed in color.

"The Street Singer"

CONSIDERABLE amusement has been afforded here by the recent appearance in "Variety" of a full-page advertisement taken by Arthur Tracy ("The Street Singer") in which quotations from "alleged" London newspapers are astonishingly paraded. Mr. Tracy's success in England is certainly not to be denied. He has worked steadily here in vaudeville, radio and screen.

But when Mr. Tracy or his management, to furnish unsuspecting Americans with "proofs" of his English triumphs, quotes tributes to his work from "The London Daily Chronicle", "The London Evening Times", "The London Echo" and the "London Daily Dispatch" one must forgive Londoners and Fleet Street people in particular for gaping in utter wonderment!

For the truth, gentlemen, is simply this: that there are no such newspapers in this city, and if there ever were they are now as comfortably extinct as the proverbial Dodo!

All Branches of Industry, England, Considering Quota Percentage Act

RKO-RADIO PICTURE ★ ★ DIRECTED BY STEPHEN ROBERTS ★

"Buddy" Rogers, Star at Shea's Hippodrome

Gives Special Interview to "Jay L" of the Digest

A slim young man of medium height, extremely handsome, and tastefully dressed in a grey sports suit, is talking: "What I like about England," says this young man, "is the fact that they take life so calmly. There is none of the mad rushing around that we have on the American continent." Your reviewer nods respectfully. "That may be true, Mr. Rogers, but do you think that British pictures will ever be a serious rival to Hollywood."

Before I relate the answer to that last question, let me explain that the charming gentleman being interrogated is none other than Charles "Buddy" Rogers, otherwise known as "America's Boy Friend". Ever since he scored that sensational success in "Wings", "Buddy" Rogers has been a headliner in the entertainment field. When not in pictures he has been busy with his famous orchestra, the California Cavaliers, with which he is now visiting Toronto. Engagements at Catalina, the Roney-Plaza in Florida, and now this tour of the United States and Canada have all managed to keep him busy, and yet not too busy to make a couple of pictures here and a couple more in England.

But on to the questions and answers . . . . "English pictures even now are beginning to vie with the American productions, and the British are improving every day. They have purchased the best equipment that money can buy, and are engaging the finest technical men in the business. In only one department are they sadly deficient, and that is 'publicity'. For some reason or other they know nothing of turning out the kind of publicity that goes to make pictures box-office sensations, nor do they seem to care much. One major studio over there has a young fellow in his early twenties as the whole publicity department, and working at the huge salary of $22.00 per week." Once more your reviewer nods respectfully.

Interruption of about five minutes while "Buddy" — it started out as Mr. Rogers, but soon it was "Buddy" signed his name in autograph books and on pieces of paper which the stage manager at Shea's brought in to him. "Isn't it a bit dangerous signing your name to blank pieces of paper?" asked your reviewer. "Well", said "Buddy", with a broad grin, "I always take a peek at both sides of the paper before I sign it."

"What about coloured pictures, 'Buddy', do you think they are here to stay?" Without a moment's hesitation the reply came, "Decidedly, yes. It won't be long before that will be all that is produced. They have made such a great advance in this natural colour process. I remember several years ago I played in 'Follow Thru', which I believe, was the first feature picture in which colour was attempted. It was a long, hot, wearisome job, and the result, well you know yourself what it was like. But then a few months ago I made a short called, 'Pirate Party at Catalina Island', and this was all in natural colour. I expected that it would take a couple of weeks of hot and uncomfortable work to make the picture, but what a surprise I got . . . . *Set this up here! Hook that up there! Places everybody! Action, Sound, Camera* . . . . And in a short time it was all over. And the result, well I was astounded."

Interruption of two minutes while "Buddy" poured out a glass of Canadian ale for the two of us . . . . Swell guy, this Rogers fellow.

"Another question, 'Buddy', what do you thing of Major Bowes Amateur Programs?" "In one way I think it is great; it is a fine thing for those amateurs who win a place on the program and in one of the units afterwards. But I am afraid that the result is going to be that men and women, young and old, will flock into New York with high hopes but slim pocketbooks, only to have their hopes dashed when they fail to make the grade, and will find themselves high and dry in a strange city with no funds and no work. It is a situation which requires a lot of consideration."

"And what are your plans for the future?" "From here the boys and I are off for California, where I am expecting to make a picture. From there I have to go to England, as I am under contract with British International Pictures, to do two pictures a year for them. Mind you, when I say I have to go, I don't mean that I don't want to, because I love England, and working there is a real pleasure.

A head poked into the dressing room, and a voice said, "You'll be on again in a few minutes, Mr. Rogers." "So soon," sighed "Buddy". "I guess you get sick of this four shows a day business,"—your reviewer.

"It's not exactly a picnic, but it's what I like to do. I enjoy giving entertainment to people."

And with that speech, which perfectly typifies the youthful orchestra leader and movie star, we took our leave, after spending a couple of very, very enjoyable hours, with a charming personality, a scholar, and a gentleman, Mr. Charles "Buddy" Rogers.

Ray Presents

(Continued from page 4)

made a survey of the theatre field; and what Mr. Spitz is doing now, by way of addition and subtraction, is as a result of the survey.

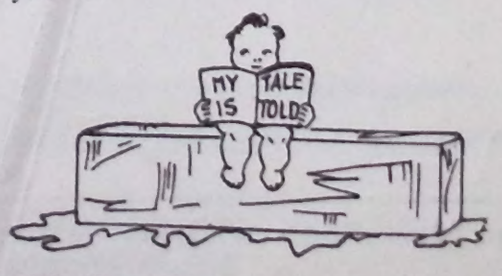
Meanwhile, with everything set in Canada, regarding the N. L. Nathanson, five-year contract with Famous-Players Canadian Corporation, there is likely to be a survey here, also.

No Famous Players Canadian common shares appear to be on the market. Following the annual meeting there was bidding at eighteen and a half, and offering at twenty, but not more than five shares changed hands in a week, according to the market column, and these at twenty.

Mr. N. L. Nathanson received an option to buy for himself and his officers, fifty thousand shares, covering a period of five years, the top price, much below twenty dollars.

There are about three hundred thousand unissued shares in the Treasury of Famous Players Canadian. Approximately 189,972 *in the Royal Trust, and approximately* 180,000 *held by Paramount.*

SOMEONE is going to make a nice little, "nest-egg", for it takes no prophet to see that Famous-Players Canadian shares are going to become valuable. The saving on the Bond issue, recently redeemed, with the placement of a bond issue, at half the rate of interest on the short term bonds, should help the market on common shares. But will the common shareholders make the profit? Profits are too sacred for the common shareholders. I answer my own question. That is one of the benefits of being an Editor, you get time to talk to yourself.



Carl Laemmle's Universal Produced 9,134 Motion Pictures, the Latest Big Ones, "Sutter's Gold," and "Show Boat"

Lulu in Hollywood

Lulu S. Niemeyer

M-G-M'S "SPEED". Directed by Edwin L. Marin, with James Stewart, Wendy Barrie, Una Merkel, Weldon Heyburn, Ted Healy, Ralph Morgan, Patricia Wilder. Will have its appeal to any and all interested in mechanics, and the difficulty one meets with in putting over a new idea to help speed, even if it is good. Stewart, as the inventor of a gadget, fails in his first test, crashing the car, and not doing such a good job on himself, either. Through the gal, Wendy, he is given another opportunity, proves his invention, but gets smashed up again. There are splendid factory scenes, and race scenes, which will appeal; and Ted Healy does himself proud with the comedy of a loyal assistant mechanic.

RKO'S "TWO IN REVOLT", with John Arledge, Louise Latimer, Moroni Olson, Harry Jans, Willie Best, and supporting cast and with "Lightning" the dog, and "Warrior", the horse. Directed by Glenn Tryon. Will go over big with all lovers of animals.

The story of the love of the animals for their master, fighting with the instinct of the call of the wild in both of them, and the loyalty of the two animals for each other, carries a mighty fine moral which two-legged animals might well follow.

Lightning, watching Warrior's first race, along with the rest of the family, decides to help out, jumps through the fence and leads Warrior to victory. Both animals revert to the call of the wild, but through many beautiful scenes we find them coming back to the love of the humans they had known.

WARNER'S "SONS O'GUNS". Directed by Lloyd Bacon, with Joe E. Brown, Joan Blondell, Beverly Roberts, Eric Blore, Winifred Shaw and a splendid supporting cast, certainly will bring in the money. Joe, the dumb, but evidently attractive doughboy, "Over There," is being pretty well pursued by three gals. What a lad, he breaks every rule of the army — is kept in hand as much as possible by his valet, Eric, is consigned to every punishment known to the army — finds himself leading a night patrol across no-man's land. In his own way, he captures a machine gun, all by his lonesome, and starts back to headquarters with half the German army at his heels. Having broken all rules known to man, he is being read, what he believes to be, his death warrant — that being all that is left in his estimation, only to find it the highest honor bestowed by France, the Croix de Guerre. The three gals, Joan, Winifred and Beverly do their stuff with songs and dances, and if this bit of entertainment doesn't stack up 100% I miss my guess.

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